

WILDER (ALEX.)

INTERMARRIAGE OF KINDRED.

CONSANGUINEOUS MARRIAGES NOT FORBIDDEN
BY MORAL OR PHYSIOLOGICAL LAW.

EVILS OF

CONNUBIAL ALLIANCES BETWEEN PERSONS OF DIVERSE RACE.

ANNUAL ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

Eclectic Medical Society

OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK,

JANUARY 26, 1870.

BY

ALEXANDER WILDER, M.D.,

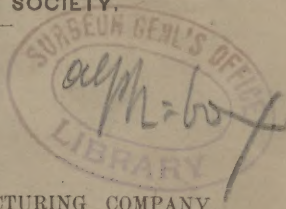
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CONSANGUINEOUS MARRIAGES.

A FEW months ago, the public mind was thrilled by the publication of a paper in the *Atlantic Monthly*, the purport of which was, that the celebrated Lord Byron had been the parent of offspring by Lady Augusta Leigh, the daughter of his own father. The excitement was occasioned by the popular impression that the offense thus indicated is often denominated unnatural. It is not the purpose, at this time, to substantiate or disprove the allegations of Mrs. Stowe. Allusion is made to the subject only because it has fixed attention upon the great moral and physiological question of the time, What is a proper conjugal alliance? May we lawfully wed our kindred, or must we seek companionship with persons of diverse families?

Moralists and legislators have taken this subject in hand, in different countries, and earnest investigations have been made for the purpose of determining what the practice should be. No result has been obtained which can properly be deemed to be conclusive. Much of what has been written must be set down as speculative, or as inferences from partial premises. An appeal to the customs and jurisprudence of different countries would only serve to inform us that these were as diverse as the genius of the several populations; and therefore would rather accomplish the purpose of showing how present laws and usages were derived, than of affording us definite ideas of what the present practice should be. For example, in China, Tartary, and other parts of Asia, the inhabitants are *exagamous*; every man is required to seek his wife from some commune other than his own. The learned Senator Morgan, of Rochester, informs us that this

requirement formerly existed among the Iroquois Indians of this State. Each of the Five Nations was divided into eight tribes, of which four were considered as having one parentage, and the remaining four as having another. Hence, it will be seen, all the Iroquois were included in two families, and all marriages were required to be contracted between members of each distinct affiliation. Any man, taking to wife a woman belonging to one of the four tribes which constituted his own family division, was forever disgraced.

Iroquois public sentiment agreed with the views of Mr. Henry James, that "what alone sanctifies the sexual instinct among men, and lifts it above mere brute concupiscence, is, that it is not rightfully bound to the sensuous caprice of the subject, but obeys the interests of society; that the welfare of society is primary in it, and the welfare of persons altogether secondary. Such is the sole meaning of marriage," in their view. "It is a social institution—a race-interest exclusively—not a personal one." Accordingly, every good Indian let his mother pick out a wife for him, and gave himself no particular trouble in the matter. In many countries which are classed as civilized a similar logic prevails, and a not unlike practice exists.

It is very possible that ethnological inquiry will yet bring to light the fact that this sentiment and custom originated at some very ancient period, in a commonwealth which comprised the ancestors of all these nations. Certainly it is apparent that tradition, rather than science or experience, has been the principal source of the different usages and legislation upon this whole subject. While one order of nations (the Mongolian) has prohibited intermarriage between those near of kin, Aryan, or Indo-European countries, have approved, and occasionally, to a certain degree, required such alliances.

ANCIENT PRACTICE IN ORIENTAL COUNTRIES.

In Athens, when a woman inherited property, her next male kinsman had the right to compel her to marry him, even separating her from a husband for the purpose. In

Egypt, Persia, and other countries of the ancient East, brothers scrupled not to ally themselves to their own sisters. Among their gods, Osiris is represented to have married Isis, his sister; and Juno was "both sister and wife to Jupiter." The records of the Old Testament show that marriage between persons of close consanguinity was regarded as meritorious, while alliances with persons of an alien race were denounced, and even required to be dissolved. Ezra, who conducted a colony of Israelites to Jerusalem, went so far as to compel all Jews who had married "strange wives" to divorce them, and send away their children, on the ground that a marriage with a person of another race was a violation of the commandment of God, and "sure to make an end of them, so that not even a remnant would escape." Nehemiah also banished a priest from Jerusalem, because he had married a Samaritan, or Horonite woman, of high rank.

King Solomon was denounced for having taken wives from among foreign nations; and even among the records of an earlier period, the patriarch Isaac is said to have been grieved because Esau, his favorite son, married Hittite women, passing by his own kindred. There is a hypothesis extant that Moses himself was excluded from the priesthood and hereditary supremacy among his people, because he had married an Ethiopian or Arab woman. The sons of Jacob preferred to take back their sister, after she had been violated by a prince of the Canaanites, and not to let him marry her.

On the other hand, there was hardly a restraint in the matter of consanguinity. The eldest son of King David desired the company of Tamar, his brother Absalom's sister, who was the daughter of the same father with himself. She besought him not to dishonor her, adding this assurance: "Speak to the king, and he will not withhold me from thee." This, it will be remembered, is the same relationship in which Lady Augusta Leigh stood with Lord Byron; and it shows that the alleged connection between them, if it had been consecrated by a marriage alliance, would not have

been regarded as incestuous or objectionable by the old Hebrew law and custom.

The patriarch Abraham, and his brother Nahor, married their own kinswomen, Nahor taking his own niece Milcah, his brother Haran's daughter; while Abraham wedded Sarah, his own sister. He declared of her to the King Abimelech: "And yet, indeed, she is my sister, the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother, and she became my wife."—*Genesis* xx. 22. Lot, his nephew, became, in his turn, the father of two powerful chieftains, by his own daughters. The patriarch Isaac married Rebekah, the granddaughter of Nahor, his father's brother. His favorite son, Esau, married the daughter of Ishmael, a cousin; and Jacob, the younger son, wedded the beloved Rachel, and the tender-eyed Leah, the daughters of Laban, cousins of a still closer degree of consanguinity. The gifted Joseph, the kingly Judah, and the warlike Levi and Simeon were the offspring of these close alliances. Again, Jochebed, the daughter of Levi, was married to Amram, her own nephew [*Exodus* ii. 1, and vi. 20], and became the mother of offspring that were thus the issue of five or six generations of consanguineous marriages; and what were they? Not idiots, not blind persons, scrofulous or deaf-mutes, but instead of such, Moses, the profoundest statesman of his age; Aaron, his eloquent brother, and Miriam, the prophetess, whose songs evince intellect of a high order. Hebrew history abounds with similar instances.

THE MODERN IDEA.

In more recent times, however, the sentiment has been assiduously inculcated in many circles that the intermarriage of kindred was a thing culpable in itself, a violation of physiological law, and vicious in its results. Two or three American legislatures have even gone so far as to prohibit marriages between first consins, compelling all such persons desirous of marrying to journey into some other State to legalize their alliance. It has often seemed to us that the great majority of persons entertaining this opinion had neither eyes nor ears

except for statistics and examples which appeared to sustain their favorite theory. We have ventured occasionally to differ widely from them, but have generally found them more ready to command us into silence, with a spiteful dogmatic assertion, than to listen to the most modest remark implying that any room existed for a doubt.*

It is a mischievous condition of the mind when the person begins his investigations with a preconceived idea which renders him blind to all facts which cannot be reconciled with it, and by consequence exaggerates out of due proportion the importance of those which really make in its favor. He may work out a strong case in favor of such an idea, but by so doing he is liable to deceive others, and hinder the advance of knowledge, in a degree exactly proportionate to his own knowledge and ability. For example, there is a prevalent idea that the cold weather of winter is particularly healthy, and that the high temperature of the summer months is especially destructive to life. The exhilaration and buoyancy of feeling produced in healthy persons by the highly condensed frosty air, owing to the rapid combustion of the material of the body, probably gave rise to this impression. But vital statistics show that this popular idea is incorrect. The same analogy may hold good in other departments of fact, even perhaps in the one of which we are now treating. Instead of quoting largely from statistics, we must make the argu-

* I have had several amusing experiences, when endeavoring to get access to the public press, to utter these opinions upon this subject. Once a personal friend, since that a Governor of a distant territory, and now its delegate in Congress, permitted a single paragraph, but appended his disclaimer in a foot-note. Afterward, the editor of Hall's *Journal of Health* having made several strange assertions upon the subject, I addressed him a letter for publication, taking issue with his position, but it was declined. On another occasion, I contributed a brief article to a newspaper in relation to the subject, using the language: "In our own and former times such marriages have not always or even generally been followed by deficiency of intellect or physical stamina in the offspring." Somebody *corrected* it by leaving the negative clause out.—A. W.

ment brief as possible, and remain content with concise statements and deductions.

THE CASE STATED BY EXAGAMISTS.

The late Dr. John C. Nott, of Mobile, an able savant, thus opens the discussion: "Will any one deny that continued intermarriages among blood-relations are destructive to a race, both physically and intellectually? The fact is proverbial. Do we not see it most fully illustrated in the royal families and nobility of Europe, where such matrimonial alliances have long been customary? The reputation of the House of Lords in England would long since have been extinct had not the Crown incessantly manufactured nobles from out of the sturdy sons of the people. Cannot every one of us individually point to degenerate offspring which have arisen from family intermarriages for mere property's sake?

"In early life I witnessed a striking example in the upper part of South Carolina, where my father owned a country seat. Almost the entire population of the neighborhood was made up of Irish Covenanters who had moved to that country before the Revolutionary war. They had intermarried for many generations, until the same blood coursed through the veins of the whole of them; and there are many persons living in South Carolina who will bear me out when I state that the population of idiots and deformed in that district was unprecedented, of which the majority in its population was stupid and debased in the extreme. I could mention several other striking examples beheld in higher life, but it would be painful to particularize."

Doctor Devay, of Lyons, in his *Hygiène de Famille*, asserts: "that in pure consanguinity, isolated from all circumstances of hereditary disease, resides, *ipso facto*, a principle of organic vitiation." He cites 121 instances of marriage between kindred, of which 99 were prolific and 22 were not.

M. Boudin takes merely the single defect of deaf-mutism, and declares: 1, That while consanguineous marriages are two per cent. of all the marriages in France, the number of

deaf-mutes born of such marriages are to all marriages as follows:—in Lyons 25 per cent.; in Paris 28 per cent.; in Bordeaux 30 per cent. 2, That the danger of deaf-and-dumb offspring increases with the nearness of kinship between the parents. 3, That parents, themselves deaf and dumb, do not, as a rule, produce deaf and dumb offspring, and that the defect is, therefore, not hereditary. 4, That the number of deaf-mutes increases in proportion to the local difficulties to freedom of cross-marrying.

Niebuhr, the historian, following in the same lead, declared, in his third volume of *Lectures on Ancient History*, that the Ptolemies of Egypt, whose history presents a most striking instance of close breeding in the human race, were degenerate, both in body and mind.

THE MODERN IDEA QUESTIONED.

Marriages of kindred, in short, are charged with occasioning sterility, mutism, idiocy, deformity, and scrofula.

With that assumption we take issue.

Before entering upon any discussion of this branch of the subject, we will remark that we entertain a strong repugnance to the popular idea in regard to marriage, that it is a relation to be entered into and maintained with a primary reference to our obligations to society, and with regard to offspring. Society has no legitimate authority thus to prescribe the limits and arbitrarily to domineer over the lawful affections of individuals, in such ways as we nowadays so often find it insisted. The rights of persons themselves are first and paramount. We believe that the marriage relation exists and should be sustained primarily and principally for the sake of the persons engaging in it, to perfect their nature and character, to make them what they should be, and to assure to them the utmost happiness of which they are capable. Jesus Christ declared that a man would forsake father and mother, and cleave to his wife; and the second chapter of the book of Genesis informs us that the Lord God formed woman as a help — meet for her husband. There was no mention made of society, or of offspring, as having anything to

do with the matter. They were regarded, as they ought to be, as strictly subordinate considerations. If persons are truly married, all these matters may be left, without much anxiety, to determine themselves.

ORIGIN OF THE MODERN IDEA.

The origin of the modern ideas about consanguineous alliances was probably ecclesiastical, and not physiological. Doctor Child, in the *Medico-Chirurgical Review*, (vol. xxix, page 469,) expresses such an opinion. "It should be remembered," he declares, "that all such marriages as those under discussion, were and are strictly prohibited in the Church of Rome. This prohibition was first removed in England by the Marriage Act of 1540, in the reign of Henry VIII. It is natural, therefore, that many people at the time should have looked upon this removal of restrictions as a somewhat questionable concession to human weakness, and upon the marriages made in consequence of it, as merely not illegal, rather than in themselves unobjectionable; just as, should the Marriage Law Amendment Bill pass into law, there can be no doubt that many would now look upon marriage with a sister-in-law as a very questionable proceeding in a social and religious point of view, although they might possibly be unable to impugn its strict legality. Under such circumstances, nothing is more natural, especially in an age when men were much more open to theological than physiological considerations, than that they should attribute any ill effects which might seem to follow from such unions to the special intervention of Providence. Such ill effects would be marked and noticed whenever they occurred, and would soon become proverbial; and when, in a later age, men began to pay more attention to the breeding of animals, and found that excessively close breeding seemed in some cases to produce similar results, they would be led to establish a false analogy between the two cases, and to infer the existence of a law of nature which close breeding and consanguineous marriages equally infringed.

"Something like this," continues Dr. Child, "I conceive

to be the true history of the common opinion upon this subject, an opinion, which, as far as I can discover, rests on no satisfactory record of observed facts."

CLOSE KINSHIP NOT ENTAILING DEGENERACY.

It is certain that the case mentioned by Niebuhr, that of the Macedonian royal family of Alexandria in Egypt, in no wise demonstrates this hypothesis. For three hundred years, intermarriage between cousins, and even brothers and sisters, as with the Incas of Peru, the Achæmanians of Persia, and the Solar tribes of India, was of usual occurrence. Yet no extraordinary physical or intellectual imbecility seems to have occurred. Cleopatra, the last sovereign of that line, was not, in any intelligible sense of words, degenerate in body or mind, but actually excelled in size as well as beauty of person, and in strength of intellect. Her posterity, instead of dying out or sinking into perpetual obscurity, again arose above the political surface; a grandson ascending the throne of Mauritania, and another of her descendants, the celebrated Zenobia, achieving glory for herself as queen of Palmyra.

Of all the consanguineous marriages that have fallen under our notice, we never knew of but a single case of idiocy; and in that case the child was born with an apparently sound mind, and only exhibited symptoms of an impaired intellect after having been severely medicated with calomel. She died in early childhood. Several of her relatives had consumption. Her parents were the children of two sisters, and the father's mother was also the wife of a first cousin. In this instance were two prominent facts, the consanguinity and the existence of consumption in the family.

In many of the investigations and inquiries which have been instituted, it should be borne in mind that only the fact of intermarriage has been taken into account, leaving out of notice other causes that must have been equally controlling. The observations of Dr. J. Langdon Down, of London, which were instituted with a view to determine the accuracy of the hypothesis of congenital mental defect arising

from such alliances, show as much. His records were taken with every care as to their correctness, and embraced 1,138 cases of idiots; 753 being males, and 385 females. These numbers, he remarks, make about the ratio, according to his experience, in which the sexes are affected by idiocy. Of the 753 male idiots, 33 were the progeny of first cousins, and in two of these instances there was also the important fact elicited that, in one case, the mother was also the offspring of first cousins; and in the other case, the mother was the child of cousins-german. Three cases were the children of second cousins, and four of third cousins. In all, forty cases out of 753, or only about five per cent., could, by any possibility, have been due to consanguineous unions. Of 295 females, thirteen were the progeny of first cousins, three of second cousins, and four of third cousins. In all, twenty out of 295—about seven per cent.—were the offspring of blood relations. Dr. Down then proceeds to consider twenty of these idiots, cases taken without selection from his portfolio. They show the apparent cause of the misfortune as follows, namely:

1. The mother was frightened, while pregnant, at seeing her mother struck with a palsy.

2. The mother died from tumor on the brain. The family was consumptive.

3. The father was a habitual, excessive drinker; and the mother, while pregnant, was frightened by a cat. The family was consumptive.

4. The family was consumptive.

5. The father's family was consumptive. The mother had an aunt that was insane. She had also had an epileptic child by a previous husband who was not her relative; and an idiotic boy and girl by the second husband, who was her second cousin. She believed that the idiocy of the boy was caused by fright, and that of the girl from her habit of brooding over that misfortune.

6. The family was consumptive. The father was eccentric and intemperate, and had an uncle that was imbecile. The mother was despondent during pregnancy. The birth

was a very difficult one, and forceps were used, by which the head of the child was badly compressed.

7. The father was feeble-minded and epileptic; the mother's family was consumptive. In the seventh month of her pregnancy, she was greatly impressed by seeing a girl in the same imbecile and idiotic condition as her own child turned out afterward to be.

8. The mother's relatives were consumptive. There were ten other children—one of them a twin-sister—all of whom were very bright and intelligent.

9. The mother was very nervous. She had other children, all of them healthy and intelligent.

10. The father's family was consumptive, and one sister was insane. The mother was scrofulous and melancholy.

11. The father was deficient in mental power; the mother had an insane aunt.

12. The father belonged to a consumptive family, and was of a very desponding mind. The mother was also of a consumptive family, and had an imbecile uncle.

13. The child was born with a misshapen head. The first three children in this family were born healthy and perfect, the fourth was idiotic, and those born subsequently died at the time of birth. The parents were first cousins.

14. The father was of a low order of intellect, and the mother's family was consumptive.

15. The father was a drunkard, and had six relatives who were stammerers. The mother's family was consumptive; and three children were idiots.

16. The father had been insane, and his mother was eccentric. Both parents' families were consumptive.

17. The father was weak and nervous; the mother was nervous, and had an insane uncle and an imbecile cousin. She was frightened, while pregnant, at seeing her husband fall in a fainting fit.

18. The father possessed an irritable temperament, and belonged to a consumptive family. The mother died of consumption, and had an insane uncle. While she was preg-

nant, she was frightened by stepping on an adder. The head of the child was greatly distorted.

19. The mother's mother and aunt were insane, and a cousin suffers from puerperal mania. Two children were idiots in this family.

20. The mother, while she was pregnant, was frightened by the sight of an idiotic man. She had other children, all of them of sound mind.

In these twenty families, there were 138 children, of whom 75 had average health and intellect; 28 were idiots; 11 were consumptive; 8 were still-born and 19 died prematurely. Dr. Down, to make his observations more complete, also selected twenty other families in which the parents were not kindred, but had idiotic children. The whole number of children was 145; of these 83 were in average health; 26 were idiots; 1 was consumptive; 11 were still-born, and 34 died prematurely. In all these families, about one fourth of the idiots were the first-born children, which seems to be a hint that mechanical injury sustained at birth had a material influence in producing the misfortune.

Dr. Bemiss, writing for the *Journal of Psychological Medicine* (April, 1857), presents 34 cases of the intermarriage of cousins, of which seven were unprolific, and 27 resulted in 192 children. Of these 58 died in early life, and 134 reached the age of maturity. The fertility of those marriages was much above the average, while the infant mortality appears to have been a little below. In 75 cases of disease among the offspring of these alliances, he classes 38 under the head of scrofula and consumption, 12 under the head of epilepsy and rheumatic disease, two of deafness, four of idiocy, and two of deformity.

In this account, Dr. Bemiss has considered only the single fact of intermarriage of blood-relatives; whereas there must have been also other causes equally controlling. It is as fair and logical to attribute all cases of murder to a single cause, as the practice of ascribing idiocy to the sole cause of parental consanguinity.

SCROFULA THE REAL CAUSE OF IDIOCY, ETC.

A critical examination of all these data will make it evident to any intelligent person, that *a scrofulous constitution*, rather than the fact of the consanguinity of these parents, was the principal cause of the calamity of these children. We venture the assertion, that an examination into the history of the idiots, the blind, deaf-mutes, and weakly children will show this to be a general fact.*

This view we find amply sustained by Prof. S. H. Dickson, of Philadelphia. In a lecture on "*Scrofulosis and Tuberculosis*," he gives his students, as his conclusion, the following hypothesis:

"Several writers on both sides of the Atlantic—on this side, Professor Bemiss—ascribe much of tuberculosis and scrofulosis to the marrying of relatives—physical incest, as it is called. I think the truth can be put in a nutshell. I suggest it to you: there is a great deal of exaggeration on this subject, yet there is much reason for the belief that the intermarriage of relatives is dangerous to the offspring, not on account of their mere consanguinity, but because they are likely to have the same predisposition to scrofula, if that predisposition exist in that family. * * * Therefore we come to the conclusion that it is not an essential result of marriage of consanguinity that there should be scrofulous or other degeneracy. Why, then, does it often happen that marriages of consanguinity are followed by physical or mental degeneracy? Because, if there is any predisposition to disease in a family, the female will have it as well as the male; if then, under such circumstances, two cousins of similar scrofulous predisposition marry each other, it is certain the offspring of these cousins will be more scrofulous than their parents; but it is not so by the law of consanguinity. For suppose two persons scrofulously predisposed,

* Since this address was delivered before the Eclectic Medical Society of the State of New York, a resolution has been adopted by that Society, appointing a committee to prosecute this inquiry in this direction.—A. W.

of the most distant and diverse race, marry, the result will be just the same without the slightest consanguinity. It is due to the predisposition, and not to the blood. It is for this reason, more apt to be encountered among married relatives; but it is not essential, it is not a law. If two cousins are healthy, and see fit to marry, there is as much reason to believe that their children would be healthy, as if they were not connected by cousinship or consanguinity at all. If their temperaments be opposite, it will be as favorable a conjunction as if they were not connected. If we could manage these things as the stock-breeder does with the lower animals, undoubtedly we could improve the human breed to a great degree."

DR. NEWMAN'S INVESTIGATIONS.

The New York State Medical Society, two or three years since, appointed a committee to institute inquiries and make a report "on the result of consanguineous marriages." The selection was fortunately made of Dr. Robert Newman, of the city of New York, a gentleman of great intelligence, candor, and genuine scientific enthusiasm. Dr. Newman directed his endeavors to procuring facts and data under the well-attested observation and knowledge of reliable men in the medical profession. The results, though by no means conclusive, were fully what ought to have been expected from such a course and spirit.

His cases, some of them, had been observed for three or four generations, and were not selected to favor any theory whatever. Thirty-two marriages were reported, from which issued 127 children, many of the couples being still productive. We find 8, 11, 12, and even 14 children in one family. Out of the 127 children, only 14 died under two years of age—about 11 per cent.; whereas, in the Metropolitan police district, the mortality of children under two years of age, in 1868, was 38 per cent. Besides these deaths, there yet survived five scrofulous children, two deaf-mutes, one epileptic, one idiot, and one having amaurosis. In other respects, these families were not specially afflicted.

A QUAKER FAMILY IN PENNSYLVANIA.

Dr. Newman presents cases furnished by several correspondents; among them, several by Mrs. Ann Preston, M.D., of Philadelphia. One of these I transcribe:

Ages.—Husband died at 71; wife is 90.

When married.—Husband at 19; wife at 21.

Constitution.—Both good.

Health.—Both good, and no deformities.

Health of families.—Good on both sides.

Relationship—Cousins; husband's father was brother to the wife's mother.

Time when married.—Sixty-nine years ago.

Number of children.—Twelve; seven sons and five daughters.

Number of abortions, &c.—One with twins.

Children died.—One son, at 7, of fever; a daughter, born feeble, at 3 months; oldest son, at 57, of bronchial disease.

Circumstances of the survivors.—Nine of the children, two of them twins, are living; they possess some decided family traits, but they are considered to be above the average capacity mentally, and two of them, as writers, possess decided and acknowledged genius. One of the sons has intermarried with his cousin, and I am informed that the children of this marriage are, mentally, less bright than their cousins, whose parents are not related.

"In all of the cases I have reported," says Dr. Preston, "the children have had whatever advantage a deep and persistent affection between parents may give to the organization of offspring, and all have had the regular habits characteristic of the Society of Friends."

It is asserted that, in several districts in the State of New York, close intermarriage has been followed by deterioration; but Dr. Newman gives statistics which appear, as far as they go, to disprove this opinion. Dr. A. Edgar, of Staten Island, reported six cases; Dr. John Vedder, of Saugerties, Ulster county, furnished fifteen; and Dr. Newman

gives one under his own observation. They all seem to justify the conclusion made by Dr. Edgar :

“I have now completed my list, giving you, so far as I know them, a correct history of all the cases of consanguinous marriages that have come under my observation ; of these marriages two were own cousins, and four were cousins’ children—no, not cousins’ children, but the husband, in three cases, was cousin to the wife’s father, and in the other case, to the wife’s mother ; those that married cousins had three children, one of which was very delicate and feeble, and died within the first two years of his life ; the other two are now living, men grown and settled in life ; the four who married cousins’ children have among them thirteen children, seven of whom have arrived at the age of maturity, and six are still in their infancy. So far as I know, there have been no abortions in these cases, and no sterility, and there have been none of the diseases and infirmities enumerated under head 18 ; there has been no want of proper physical development in any of these children, and the hereditary diseases have not shown themselves up to the present time ; these children have all been born of wealthy parents, and were surrounded by all the comforts and luxuries that wealth could furnish ; they have been brought up, with two exceptions, under the eye of their parents, and have had all the care and attention that parental solicitude could bestow.”

Indeed, it is noteworthy that the examples which are generally presented to show the inherent objectionableness of alliances between kindred, seem to have been marshalled for the occasion, and not fairly selected ; thus fully justifying the remark of Dr. Gilbert Child : “ *To say that all but half the children of the marriage of cousins are idiotic, is simply to say that the cases from which the statistics were drawn were not fair cases.*”

Dr. Newman concludes as follows : “The opinions cited are all of distinguished and reliable observers, whose very diversity of thought and suggestion should be reason sufficient to stimulate the additional, continued, and close obser-

vation of our profession in general upon this subject ; while the results of such inquiry, we doubt not, will certainly remove much of the odium now resting upon consanguineous marriages.

“The principle of ‘like begetting like’ is never denied, but the various modifications arising from outside conditions—the unpredictable and startling influences upon the mother during the period of gestation ; the deteriorating habits and health of parents ; the effect of the combination of similar or dissimilar temperaments ; the depressing influences upon progeny of monetary or political convulsions ; the affinital laws of organization, causing unity or love, disunity or hate, between parents, affecting, in an entirely unknown manner, progeny—assuredly leave the question of the results of consanguineous marriages, although strictly an undetermined one, yet relieved of much of the evil with which it has been hitherto charged.”

INQUIRY IN CONNECTICUT.

Several years ago, an inquiry into the subject was instituted by the Legislature of Connecticut. Investigations have also been prosecuted in different parts of Europe. They seem to show that the kinship of parents has a relatively slight influence in the matter.

CASE IN GERMANY.

We cannot but notice here a fact communicated by Dr. II. Knapp, late professor in the University of Heidelberg, which appears in Doctor Newman’s statistics : In Nassau (Germany), only three families established the village of Dauborn, and kept entirely isolated. Their children, therefore, intermarried ; and at present the village has 1,500 inhabitants, who are of strong constitution, and are active, sprightly, intelligent, and healthy. Our informant had this place directly under his observation, and says he neither saw deformity nor insanity, and only one case of deaf-mutism ; in fact, the entire race was robust and heathful. The same gentleman had under his observation the Roth-

schild family, the well-known financiers of Europe. Inter-marriage is here the rule, but, nevertheless, the family and their progenies are flourishing in health and good constitutions.

We feel warranted in declaring our fullest conviction of the correctness of Dr. Child's proposition: "The marriages of blood-relations have no tendency, *per se*, to produce degeneration of race."

CASE CITED BY M. VOISIN IN FRANCE.

The following paragraph from the Paris correspondence of *The Evening Post*, of New York City, in 1867, appears to substantiate this conclusion, and we give it accordingly:

"To elucidate the truth of the general thesis that consanguineous marriages produce disease and idiocy in the offspring, M. Voisin has made some very minute researches in the commune of Pratz, a little place at the mouth of the Loire, which contains a population of three thousand three hundred people, exclusively occupied in the cultivation of salt marshes. Hardly any outsiders are ever drawn to this place, and the marriages take place, by special dispensation, even within the degrees of consanguinity forbidden by the Church. M. Voisin minutely investigated the circumstances of forty-six families resulting from such marriages, and has prepared tables to show that neither vices of conformation, insanity, idiocy, cretinism, deaf-muteness, epilepsy, albinism, nor pigmentary retinitis, existed among any of these families.

Five of these alliances were between cousins-german, thirty between second cousins, and ten between those of the fourth degree of consanguinity. Most of the children possessed more than an ordinary degree of intelligence, and the inhabitants are long-lived, preserving a good degree of bodily vigor and mental power.

M. Voisin concludes, from these and other facts, "that the dangers of consanguine marriages result from an intensification of any morbid hereditary tendencies that may exist in each parent; while, if each be perfectly healthy, the fact of consanguinity counts for nothing."

This is probably the generally correct conclusion. Like must inevitably produce its like, except where a psychological law transcends the influence of the physiological, and so endows the offspring with a health, a moral and mental vigor, to which the parents were strangers. We have observed repeated examples of this.

CONSANGUINEOUS PAIRING AMONG ANIMALS.

We know certainly that among the animals and birds there is no repugnance or physiological law interdicting kinship in their alliances. Pigeons are reared by pairs, and generally select for mates those hatched simultaneously with themselves in the same nest. They have done this for so many thousand years as to determine the whole question, so far as they are concerned. The eagle and the raven, the swan, and indeed the entire races that populate the air, generally follow a like custom, by a principle of natural selection. The same thing is true of the lion of the forest, the apes, and other quadrupeds. It has been equally common in the rearing of domestic animals, although the results have not been always as uniform. The example of the animal creation furnishes few arguments, therefore, to sustain the modern view.*

* THEORY OF DR. W. BYRD POWELL.

The late Dr. W. Byrd Powell devoted much time to the

* "The animal kingdom has been studied closely (says Dr. Newman), and the laws of parentage with more precision established, particularly in reference to the breeding of our domestic animals—horses, cattle, dogs, etc. Nearly all our thorough-bred horses are bred in and in. Dr. Child, in *Medico-Chirurgical Review* for April 1862, gives the pedigree of the celebrated bull, Comet, and of some other animals, bred with a great degree of closeness; in one of these cases, the same animal appears as the sire in four successive generations, and in all of them, it is implied, without any marks of degeneracy. M. Boudin, in *Comptes Rendus*, August 5, 1862, gives the particulars of a flock of merinos, bred in and in for a period of twenty-two years, without a single cross, and with perfectly successful results, there being no sign of decreased fertility, and the breed in other respects having been improved. Hence that argument of deterioration seems defective in the case of animals, and evidently needs some modification."

elaboration of a system which should account for the morbid influences transmitted from ancestors. He declared, with great emphasis, that physiologically incompatible marriage was the cause of scrofulous diathesis, and the remote cause of scrofulous forms of disease. The parties to such alliances, he asserted, were sure to entail on their children blindness, deafness, monstrosity, moral depravity, idiocy, imbecility, a scrofulous diathesis, or some other abnormal condition. But Dr. Powell found himself compelled to abandon the hypothesis, that the marriage of blood-relations was liable to produce these evils simply because of the fact of consanguinity. On the other hand, in the *Eclectic Medical Review*, of May, 1867, he declares otherwise:

“The opinion is widely spread and deeply founded in the public mind that consanguine marriage deteriorates the species by entailing on progeny idiocy, such cerebral imperfections as result in insanity, and constitutions so depraved as to produce all the known forms of scrofulous disease. But statistics on both sides of the Atlantic have failed to sustain the truth of this very general opinion; on the contrary, they show that there are more of the evils complained of on the outside of the circle of consanguinity than within it, showing that the cause of the evils above named is more extensive than consanguine marriages. And of this character,” adds Dr. Powell, “is a fact which was communicated to me a few weeks since, namely: Doctor Patterson, Superintendent of the Ohio Idiotic Asylum, informs me that although he has been very particular in his inquiries as to the progenitors of the idiots brought to the institution, yet he has succeeded in finding but ten per cent. of them to have had consanguine progenitors. This single fact is, in my opinion, sufficient to cast a shadow of doubt upon the verity of the very prevalent opinion of consanguine influence on progeny.”

It is a notorious fact that the Derby family of England have intermarried for centuries, and the late prime minister was the son of first cousins. Physically and mentally he must be acknowledged to be a splendid specimen of a man; and his son, Lord Stanley, has already taken rank among the

foremost and ablest statesmen of the young nobility. The family of Queen Victoria, herself the daughter of cousins, and married to one, are not uncomely or malformed. The blood has never been of the best, but does not appear to have suffered from deterioration. It is not difficult to multiply examples.

Doctor Powell propounded a theory of his own to account for physical degeneracy, and especially for the generation of scrofula; which is the real parent of the other maladies. He taught that there were four human temperaments, two of which—the sanguine and bilious, he denominated *vital*; and the others, the encephalic and lymphatic, he termed *adjunctive*. Alliances between two of like temperaments he denominated physiologically incestuous, and sure to result in entailing scrofula upon the offspring.* Some fifteen years

* 1. The marriage of a person with another of the same temperament is incestuous.

2. When an adjunctive temperament enters into the constitution of both progenitors or parties to a marriage, it will be incestuous.

I will add a case or two that will illustrate both of them:

1. When both of the parties to a marriage have the sanguine encephalic temperament, their children will die young of dropsy of the brain, or of tubercular inflammation of its membranes.

2. When both of the parties to a marriage have the bilious encephalic temperament, their children will be idiotic.

3. When both of the parties to a marriage have the bilious encephalic lymphatic temperament, their children, in the proportions of 5 to 7, or 9 to 11, will be dead-born, and the others will not live two years respectively. These three cases illustrate both laws.

I will now illustrate the second law exclusively:

4. When one party is bilious lymphatic, and the other is sanguino-bilious encephalic, their children will *all* die young of tubercular consumption of the lungs, or abdominal glands, although neither of these forms of disease was ever in the ancestry of either party.

5. If one party be sanguine encephalic, and the other bilious lymphatic, the progeny will die young of tuberculous forms of disease.

6. If one party be bilious encephalic, and the other sanguine encephalic bilious lymphatic, the children will sooner or later become insane.

In the three preceding illustrations, the temperaments of the parties, respectively, are greatly different; yet as in each case both parties par-

ago," said he, "I was induced to suspect a physiological incompatibility between the sexes in regard to progeny, and the result has been an entire conviction of the truth of my suspicion. This incompatibility prevails extensively in society, and is, I am confident, the cause of all the idiocy, much of the insanity, all of the tubercular consumption of the lungs and of mesenteric glands of the abdomen, and of all the scrofulous forms of disease incidental to the human race."

The theory of Doctor Powell is, indeed, a very gloomy one. No community could long exist free from the scrofulous and other maladies indicated in his hypothesis. Two or three generations will generally be sufficient to blend all his temperaments so completely, that few or no persons will be left except such as are what he denominates "physiologically incompatible." The alliance of which he considers compatible temperaments must inevitably result in a general commixture, so that every person will have some proportion of each vital and of each adjunctive temperament, which would render him more or less incompatible for any conjugal alliance whatsoever. Not being able to extricate ourselves from that dilemma, and finding that the human race does not greatly fall off in numbers, we abandon the theory as somehow at fault, and seek for our faith a firmer and more satisfactory foundation.

We acknowledge most cordially that physiological as take constitutionally of an adjunctive temperament, all the marriages are respectively incestuous.

Law 3.—In all marriages with a view to, or expectation of, progeny, one of the parties should have an exclusively vital temperament, and then it is best that the other party should be more or less adjunctive.

1. Illustration: One party sanguine, the other bilious encephalic, or lymphatic, or bilio-encephalic lymphatic.

2. One party bilious, the other sanguine encephalic or lymphatic or sanguino-encephalic lymphatic.

3. One party sanguine bilious, the other sanguine lymphatic or bilious lymphatic, sanguine or bilious encephalic, or bilio-encephalic lymphatic.

These are all good marriages.

well as moral laws are uniform in their operations and circumstances, knowing "no variableness, neither shadow of turning." We must hold every controversialist to the point that, whatever was right for a Hebrew patriarch, unless there has been a subjective modification of conditions, cannot be wrong for an American citizen of this nineteenth century.

HYBRIDITY RENDERING MARRIAGES OF KINDRED IMPROPER.

This, however, brings us face to face to the question, whether there can such modifications of conditions take place, as to render the intermarriage of kindred, in certain instances, improper and likely to produce unfortunate results. In our judgment, there could ; but, even then, we must insist that the kinship is but a single one of the relations interdicted. The law governing the matter is founded on a deeper principle. It is the same law which the old Hebrew lawgiver, Ezra, indicated. There should be no marriage alliance between persons of distinct branches of the human family. The condition which ever renders intermarriage between relations or other persons an infraction of physiological law, is evolved from hybridity, or the commingling of distinct races. It has become fashionable in certain circles to recommend alliances between distinct branches of the human family ; but Nature appears to have set upon it the seal of abhorrence.*

* "Dr. Alexander Wilder, in an article showing thoughtful research upon this subject, with a spirit of scientific frankness, denies the fact of deterioration of the human family by intermarriage, but places great stress upon the force of conditions which would render marriage between relatives or other persons alike an infraction of physiological law upon the principle of hybridity, that underlies most of these sexual wrongs. Against this commingling of distinct races or types of men, Dr. W. emphatically asserts, 'nature has set her seal of abhorrence.' He also says, facts show that some vital law exists transcending the common vision of our physiological inquiries, by which children are the doomed victims of parental disunity. They must suffer mentally, physically, and morally. The development of this internal affinital principle under a law of social science, offers a solution to some

AGASSIZ ON MIXTURE OF RACES.

Agassiz declares that a mixture of species has in it a principle of weakness and deterioration, and that the purest-blooded races are the most valid and intellectual.

MONGRELISM CANNOT BE MADE A PERMANENT TYPE.

Mr. Carpenter says, in relation to this subject: "It may be considered as a fundamental fact, alike in the vegetable and the animal kingdom, that hybrid races, originating in the sexual connection of individual species, do not tend to self-perpetuation; the hybrids being nearly sterile with each other, although they may propagate with either of their parent races, in which the hybrid will soon merge."

This sentence doubtless explains why certain marriages are unfortunate, so far as relating to offspring. The human kingdom is divided into a plurality of races, and must have had a diversified parentage. The families belonging to a single race, like the Abrahamides, who were of pure Chaldean stock, intermarried half-brothers with half-sisters—we do not know but, more closely still, nephews with aunts, cousins with cousins, with perfect impunity. The Ptolemaic and other Macedonian families allied brothers with sisters for whole centuries, without apparent harm. The royal family of Persia, the Achæmanians, also of pure Aryan stock, did the same thing. These examples may be multiplied.

But when an alliance is had with an alien race, then the intermarriage appears to be attended with calamitous results. In this country, the social experiment is in progress of uniting distinct races under one set of institutions. We regard it with much apprehension. We desire not to tyrannize over a human being of whatever race; but we have only a limited measure of faith in the attempt of conferring homogeneous

of the causes from which posterity now suffers even the terrible penalties of malformation and idiocy. This fact well established, would, of course, diminish a large proportion of the evils we have been accustomed to place at the door of blood ties."—*Dr. Newman. Report on Consanguineous Marriages.*

social conditions upon heterogeneous peoples. Certainly, we must deprecate any connubial relationship among them, as mischievous and destructive. It is said that the mulatto of this continent is a fearful sufferer from scrofula. We regret that more careful observations have not been made in relation to this matter. We are of opinion that such stocks as the Aryan or Indo-European race, as the Scandinavians, Teutons, Celts, Slaves, Iberians, and what French writers are so fond of denominating the Latin nations, several of them at least, are so essentially distinct from each other, that intermarriage will result in a mongrel offspring and many of the evils attendant upon hybridity. Certainly we have observed among our people a repugnance, which we would fain consider natural, to such alliances. While our best yeomanry have been descended from English commons, Scotch lowlanders, Irish Presbyterians, and Holland Dutch, the posterity of the ancient Sea-kings, and intermarriage between them has not wrought apparent evil, we are very apprehensive that the blending of that stock with the Slavic and other emigrants from Europe, would entail upon the offspring the degeneration and degradation incidental to mixture of blood. Of course, we cannot approve alliances with the aboriginal tribes, with the negro population, or the Chinese and other Mongolian emigrants, where there is such far remoteness from identity of race.

MONGRELISM AMONG ANIMALS.

We see this same law also exemplified in the animal kingdom around us. The mule cannot propagate his kind. Even among sheep it has been found difficult to continue a mongrel breed, except by constantly recurring to the parent stocks for its reproduction. Farmers in this State remember their tedious and unsuccessful endeavors to preserve the Saxon merino sheep, a cross between the native sheep of Germany and the merino of Spain. The lambs were feeble and tender, and but a part of them would reach maturity. Similar results have been observed in regard to dogs.

King Charles II. of England produced a breed of spaniels, a hybrid, which is now extinct.

DR. NOTT ON HYBRIDITY.

The following example, cited by Dr. John C. Nott, illustrates why intermarriage and alliances between races of stocks alien to each other should not be permitted :

"The recreant crew of *conti baroni marchesi*, in Spain, Portugal, Italy, Sicily, and parts of Southern Europe, include some of the most abject specimens of humanity anywhere to be found. The physical cause of this deterioration from the historical greatness of their ancestral names is said to be 'breeding in and in.' Now, this may be true enough, as an apparent reason ; but is there not a latent one ? History shows that the families most degraded (in Portugal especially, where the lowest types are encountered) are compounded of Iberian, Celtic, Arab, Jewish, and other types—pure in themselves but bad in the amalgam. Pride of birth for centuries has prevented them from marrying out of the circle of aristocracy. With some exceptions, they are too mean in person to be accepted by the *white* nobility of northern Europe. The consequence is, they intermarry with themselves ; and as in other mulatto compounds, the offspring of such mongrel comminglings deteriorate more and more in every generation. They cease to procreate, and there are some hopes that the corrupt breed is extinguishing itself. * * * * I have suggested elsewhere that, through the law of hybridity alone, the human family might possibly become exterminated by a thorough amalgamation of all the various types of mankind now existing upon the earth."

MERGING OF HYBRIDS INTO A PARENT STOCK.

Mr. Carpenter, as has been cited, declares that "hybrids are nearly sterile with each other, although they may propagate with either of their parent races, into which the hybrid will soon merge."

A reference to history will show how nature devotes herself to the clearing of lineages, and thereby preserving the vitality

of races and families. The Muscovite nobles of Eastern Europe have been cleansed of their Turanian blood and inducted among the Aryan peoples. But the Vandals who colonized Northern Africa fourteen centuries ago, the Normans in Sicily and England, the Goths in Spain and Italy, the Franks in France, appear to have been lost or merged in the original types of the population; while the Hebrews and Gypsies, the Welsh and Irish, the Basques and Slavic tribes, have not even altered a feature since they first appeared on the arena of history. The Brahmins of India, the royal families of Russia and England, have preserved their characteristics by carefully intermarrying in their own race. It seems only to require but a few generations to cause mongrelism substantially to disappear from a family, so feeble is the vitality of mongrels as a distinct human type.

Doctor Knox, another English writer of note, corroborates the doctrine that there is a physiological law which extinguishes mixed races (a people composed of two or more races) and causes the one originally more numerous to predominate, unless supplies be continually drawn from the primitive pure breeds. He says: "No mixed race can stand their ground for any long period of years. The Danish (Scandinavian or Saxon) blood, which must have existed in abundance in South England, during and subsequent to Canute's time, has given way before the Flemish races which preceded the Saxon, and now prevails everywhere. All traces of the Scandinavian and Celt seem to have left Greece. The mingled Italian races, the product of so many others, seem fast reverting to a primitive race which occupied Italy before Rome was founded. A mixed race may be produced, but it cannot be supported by its own resources, but by continual draughts from the two great races which originally gave origin to it."

THE BROADER FIELD FOR INQUIRY.

Let our modern writers on physiology and hereditary descent be in less hurry to arrive at conclusions, and less tenacious of shaping their testimony to bolster up their

peculiar doctrines. There is a broader field for their observations. When they shall have thoroughly explained the principles laid down in the law of Moses on this subject, they will be nearer to the root of the matter, and better able to explain the sources of idiocy and other congenital afflictions. But to make the single agency of intermarriage between kindred responsible for the principal part of the mischief, with little regard to attendant circumstances and conditions, is evidence of very superficial observation. Its tendency is to demoralize legislation, and to establish a code of morals which is at war with human nature itself.

The sanctities of the social state are not created by external statute regulations, nor do they exist by virtue of priestly consecration, however important both these may be in affording honorable public sanction and other advantages to the true marriage relation. Where there is no proper home-life, there can be no joining together by the hand of God. Alas, for children who are born under such a condition! they are the doomed victims of parental disunity, and must suffer physically, mentally, and morally. To this department of inquiry let those who debate the causes of degeneracy of race or family also turn their attention. They would be often astounded at the disclosures obtained in this hot-house of human woe. Here melancholy, insanity, idiocy, predisposition to crime, as well as malformations, are generated, to an extent that seems to have hardly been suspected.

THE TRUE LAW OF CONJUGAL UNITY.

There is a vital law transcending the common vision of our physiological theorists. It is back of all the principles with which they deal, and innate in the very essential life itself. It is above the external laws, and therefore controls and subordinates them. The human soul is the real selfhood of the person, and its interior principles are more potent than those laws which relate chiefly to the mere functions of flesh and blood. Here, we apprehend, we have come upon the true solution of the great problem, the perfectibility of the human race.

When a true unity exists between the two connubial partners, their life, their vital energy, is heightened and intensified by their intimate consociations; and there is the best reason, therefore, for supposing that the auras, the vital potencies, emanating from their interior being, both increase the volume of life in each other, and induce in their offspring a condition of health, vigor, and intellectuality which no other physiological conditions, by themselves, however apparently perfect, can develop.

When the patriarch Jacob met his lovely cousin at the well in Mesopotamia, it is recorded, "And Jacob kissed Rachel, and he lifted up his voice and wept." With this introduction to the story, we need look no farther to learn why their illustrious son Joseph was a man of virtue beyond common men; why he possessed transcendent wisdom, so that Pharaoh testified that there was no one in Egypt as wise and discreet as he; why everything prospered in his hand; and why "he was handsome in form and handsome in appearance."

There often is, and there may and should be, to a certain degree at least, such a oneness of soul, that the thought which takes form in the mind of the one, the wish which springs up in the heart, is not only responded to, but simultaneously exists, or is impressed upon the interior consciousness of the other, whether the two are in the immediate company of each other in one place, or at considerable distances apart.

If religion is warranted in teaching us to regard the Supreme Being as "our Father in heaven," and Jesus declared truly that "the kingdom of heaven is within," then humanity is divine as to its origin and its interior tendencies. Man was formed in the image of God, as well in sex as in intellect and heart; for God ordained them all. The divine word speaks into life and sustains life, and guides the soul by its interior instincts to the proper associate. In the distractions, the various confusing circumstances and occurrences of our every-day life, we often fail to obtain and keep sight of this; and our nuptial alliances are frequently con-

tracted from other motives and influences, as well as according to different theories. Yet, as the prophet declared of a vision, "It is from God, and its interpretation is sure."

When this, the real physiological law, the law of the soul itself, is known and obeyed, then will connubial life be harmonious; children will be born and reared pure, vigorous, intellectual, and happy; society will be constructed aright, and the words of Jesus will be understood in their true meaning: "What God has joined together let no man put asunder."

